THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI *PRAMOD MAHAJAN*): (a) In respect of IT penetration benchmarks such as number of computers, internet connections, internet gateway bandwidth etc., in comparison to the population, India is far below the standards of developed countries even though India as a nation is growing in terms of its ability to provide skilled manpower to the world in areas of IT software and services.

(b) The average number of internet connections per hundred population in India is over 0.25. The figures for England, Europe and America are estimated to be around 5 to 30.

(c) The Government has taken several steps to improve internet access. The steps taken in this regard are given in Annexure.

**Interim report of the Task Force on HRD in IT**

3717. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Interim Report of the Task Force on the Human Resource Development in Information Technology has expressed concern over the "quality" of I.T. Graduates and their "low acceptance" by the Industry which would result in "under employment" and "other serious repercussions" as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 23rd January, 2001;

(b) whether in order to identify this as a "thrust area" Government propose to launch an "IT Faculty Development Initiative" on a crash basis to address this problem and also propose to create a "Faculty Development Fund"; and

(c) what is at present teacher-student ratio for IT courses as against AICTE relaxed norms of 1:15?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Interim Report of the Task Force on Human Resource Development (HRD) in IT has recommended an investment of Rs. 2000 crores (which includes Faculty Development Initiative) over

the next 6-7 years for IT Education to ensure adequate number and quality of IT manpower is available.

(c) Although, no detailed survey has been done, as per a sample survey for the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) approved institutions, teacher: student ratio varies from 1:39 to 1:52 (average being 1:45) for IT courses, against AICTE relaxed norms of 1:15.

**National Wage Policy**

3718. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:
SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any suggestions have been received from the Trade Unions about a National Wage Policy;

(b) if so, the details of the suggestions;

(c) whether the Trade Unions have suggested for a Tripartite Cell for rehabilitation of sick units in the country for arresting increasing unemployment; and

(d) the action proposed to ensure rehabilitation of sick units to avoid retrenchment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) The issues relating to National Wage Policy have been under discussion with the representatives of Trade Unions in various fora over the years. The key elements of a National Wage Policy framework like payment of wages, timeliness of wage payment, non-discrimination in wage between men and women are governed by legislations such as Minimum Wages Act, 1948, Payment of Wages Act, 1936 and Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.

(c) Such matters are discussed in tripartite fora which are already available in the Ministry of Labour *(e.g.* Indian Labour Conference). As such there is no need to set up a Tripartite Cell.

(d) The Government has already initiated action to strengthen the